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Lie Tests Weed Out Ablest in CIA Job Lists, Expert Says

By Frank Meazer
United Press International

Has the Central Intelligence Agency's omnipresent lie detector finally turned on its master? A Stanford University intelligence expert said yesterday that it has.

Stefan T. Possony of Stanford's Hoover Institution said the use of the lie detector in pre-employment clearance tests by the CIA and other intelligence agencies is tending to weed out the active, all-American, conscientious and virile types most urgently needed as spies.

Conversely, he said, overreliance on the lie detector actually helps open the way for employment of homosexuals, drones and trained Communist agents.

Sex Is Emphasis Point

That is just the opposite of the way the CIA likes to think its lie detectors work. The Agency and some other intelligence forces use the lie detector routinely as a part of pre-employment testing, as well as in many other situations, and one point of emphasis is usually sex.

In a study prepared for congressional investigators, Possony said the trouble is that the lie detector measures mainly emotional reactions on the use of the lie detector like fear.

He said most virile young men with normal sex drives reared in the tradition that sex life is a private matter respond uneasily to bureau-

cratic questioning about their sex experience. This causes the lie detector to register doubt. In security cases, doubts tend to be resolved against the applicant.

"By contrast, the genuine homosexuals, who lack even the rudiments of guilt feelings about their sex life and actually may be very proud of it, probably will pass the lie detector with flying colors," Possony said.

Says May Even Help

"The lie detector may even help them to clear themselves of 'unjustifiable' allegations."

Humdrum applicants with little or no sex drive (and no initiative, either) likewise can pass the lie detector test with no sweat, Possony said. As for counterspies, he said

Russian spy schools know all about the CIA's use of lie detectors in personnel screening and can be presumed to have no trouble at all training infiltrators to beat the machine.

The CIA declined comment on the charges. Other Government intelligence

sources, conceding Possony's expertise in the intelligence field generally, questioned his particular qualifications and said his conclusions are wrong. They said the lie detector test is merely one of many steps in clearing applicants for intelligence work.

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CIA Is Screening Out James Bond-Type Spy, Personnel Study Says

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23 (UPI).—The trouble with the Central Intelligence Agency's lie detectors is that they tend to reject such virile heroes as James Bond—Secret Agent 007—if they apply for jobs as spies.

Conversely, overreliance on the lie detector actually helps open the way for employment of homosexuals, drones and trained Communist agents.

This is the burden of a claim in a report Monday by Dr. Stefan T. Possony, of Stanford University's Hoover Institution, an intelligence expert, who prepared a report for a Government committee.

He said use of the lie detector in pre-employment clearance tests by the CIA and other intelligence agencies is tending to weed out the active, all-American, conscientious and virile types most urgently needed as spies.

The CIA and some other intelligence forces use the lie detector routinely as a part of pre-employment testing. One point of emphasis usually is sex.

Possony is director of international political studies at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, a principal repository for basic source material in anti-Communism. He served 18 years in U. S. intelligence agencies and has devoted almost 28 years to problems of strategy and related questions of intelligence and security.

He leveled his attack on the lie detector in a paper prepared at the invitation of Rep. Cornelius E. Gallagher (D., N. J.) for delivery to a Government Operations subcommittee headed by Rep. John E. Moss (D., Calif.).

In his study, Possony said the trouble is the lie detector measures mainly emotional reactions such as fear.

He said most virile young men

with normal sex drives, reared in the tradition that sex life is a private matter, respond uneasily to bureaucratic questioning about their sex experience. This causes the lie detector to register doubt. In security cases, doubts tend to be resolved against the applicant.

"By contrast, the genuine homosexuals, who lack even the rudiments of guilt feelings about their sex life and actually may be very proud of it, probably will pass the lie detector with flying colors," Possony said. "The lie detector may even help them to clear themselves of 'unjustifiable' allegations."

As for counterspies, Possony said Russian spy schools know all about the CIA's use of lie detectors in personnel screening and can be presumed to have no trouble at all training infiltrators to beat the machine.

He said the emphasis on sex habits in employment testing is based on the possibility that U. S. agents may be subjected to blackmail and tempted to compromise security. He conceded this risk but said U. S. intelligence aggravates it by adhering to false sexual guides.

Possony did not suggest that any U. S. intelligence agency is either overrun with sex deviates, suffocated by hacks, or left wide open for espionage.

He said, however, that "there is some ground to believe . . . that Communist agents still are operating in American intelligence organizations and perhaps that there are more of them than ever."

The CIA declined comment on the charges. Other Government intelligence sources said Possony's conclusions are wrong.

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CIA Lie Detector Tests Hit as Excluding Ablest

By JACK KELSO

Star Staff Writer

A Stanford University professor with a background of many years in government intelligence has elained the lie detector tests used to screen employees of the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency weed out qualified people and open the way to undesirables.

The professor, Dr. Stefan T. Possony of Stanford's Hoover Institution, made this contention in a report to be submitted to a Government Operations subcommittee investigating the use of lie detectors in the federal government.

Possony contended in his 136-page report that red-blooded, All-American types, who are most needed as intelligence agents, tend to be weeded out in the pre-employment clearance tests, which use lie detectors.

Instead, the professor asserted, the polygraph machines help open the way for drones, homosexuals and even trained Communist spies.

"I do think that a very large portion of the persons presently working in intelligence should not be in this activity," he said.

Calls It "Hoax"

The polygraph is not responsible for all the federal government's personnel problems, he said. But he added that "many difficulties result from the mentality that has put its trust into a hoax machine like the lie detector."

A large number of Government agencies use the lie detector as part of routine pre-employment testing. Possony noted that questions on sex are stressed in such tests.

"In order to recruit people who are really qualified for jobs in the intelligence organizations, persons with a high level of energy, imagination, courage to be nonconformists . . . intelligent, courageous and aggressive extroverts are needed.

"The sex behavior of people of this type tends to run counter to the Victorian norms . . .," Possony said.

"By contrast," he said, "the genuine homosexuals who lack

even rudiments of guilt feelings about their sex life and actually may be very proud of it, probably will pass the polygraph examination with flying colors.

Might Clear Seives

"The polygraph may even help them to clear themselves against 'unjustified' allegations."

Possony explained that people who are not homosexuals but who did have some homosexual experience "probably will be . . . eliminated from employment very frequently because their strong guilt feelings will almost force them to betray themselves."

Possony noted that as far as security is concerned "it is highly probable" that many applicants or employees have engaged in sex acts about which they have doubts, guilt or shame, and "about which they will be most disinclined to tell the truth."

Possony, who served for 18 years in Federal intelligence organizations, prepared the report for Rep. Cornelius E. Gallagher, D-NY.

Gallagher, while not a member of the subcommittee investigating lie detectors, helped spark the investigation.

Quackery Mentioned

Opening the report, Possony said: "It would not be too far off the mark to compare the polygraph with quackery like cancer cures, medicines that prevent baldness, weight reduction preparations or, better still with astrology, which does in fact influence the activities of many people.

"The trouble with quackery is not only that it does not help but that it is dangerous and may be catastrophic."

Possony explained that the Russians have known for years that American intelligence agencies use lie detectors for screening purposes and added: "They apparently run a study on how to beat the polygraph."

But, he said, a bona fide applicant who submits to a lie detector examination in most instances knows nothing about

"In fact, on account of the surprise which he is experiencing, he is usually thrown off balance," Possony said.